

Impact of Interim VRS Rate

Communication Service for the Deaf

Meeting with FCC - DRO on 10/14/03

The User

- Overall decline in quality of service
- Limited hours of service
- Longer answer times
- Quality of interpreters declining (experienced VIs leaving the profession)

The Interpreter

- Significant physical and mental fatigue, due to decreased recovery time between calls
- Decreased effectiveness of interpretation because of lack of time to mentally and physically disengage between calls
- Safer and more comfortable work in the field
- Repeated communications during a VRS calls due to increased interpreter error as a result of fatigue and in-experience

The Provider

- Occupancy 35% before July 1, now running at 50%
- Marked attrition of interpreters in 3 centers (NY, TX, DC) – many of the more qualified VIs have chosen to return to Community Interpreting
- Stepped up training of new interpreters recruited to backfill vacated positions
- Difficulty recruiting new interpreters due to developing reputation of overuse in VRS industry and associated declining working conditions
- Shifting to a non-traditional approach to call center scheduling (alternating employee shifts to avoid injury – balance with community interpreting – impacting VI employee models and operations costs)
- Occupational safety concerns with potential for injury over extended periods of time and impact to operations expense